

Estate Planning: Lessons Learned From Larry Hagan

Larry Hagan died in November of 2012 after complications with throat cancer. Hagan was best known as an actor that portrayed oil baron J.R. Ewing on the drama "Dallas" from 1978 to 1991 and also starred in the sitcom "I Dream of Jeannie". There is several estate planning lesson that can be learned from Larry Hagan.

The lesson about planning an estate is to take advantage of second chances and wake up calls. Hagan had an acknowledged alcohol problem and drank heavily during his career as a television actor. He claimed in a 1995 interview with People magazine that "the drinking sometimes made it harder to remember lines, but I liked that constant feeling of being mildly loaded". Later in his life, Hagan was diagnosed with cirrhosis of the liver and required a life-saving liver transplant in 1995. Many times it takes a health scare as a wakeup call for the average person to begin thinking about estate planning and thinking about leaving a legacy behind. Many people do not get a second chance at life like Hagan did, but once one is granted a reprieve from death there is no better time to acknowledge mortality and begin planning. It is never too early to begin planning with at least a simple last will and testament, advance health directives, and a durable power of attorney, and there is no right time to begin. Some health events that one may suffer from may be more immediately fatal such as a heart attack or car accident that may not leave time for a second chance like Hagan received. It is better to have estate planning documents in place before they are needed and before it is too late to make them.

Another lesson that Hagan taught was to use his second chance to leave behind a legacy of charity and good works. Hagan worked with American Cancer Society's annual Great American Smokeout and the National Kidney Foundation later in his life to raise awareness and help raise money for those causes. Sometimes it is more important to leave behind a legacy that is not measured in dollars and assets as memories of helping and giving can last longer than just leaving behind possessions. Hagan used his health problems as a way to help others and teach other to be healthy and avoid the results that happened to him. It would have been easy for Hagan to give up, but he will long be remembered for fighting on. For more information on this article please visit

<http://estateplanning.ekglaw.com/post/36608881185/larry-hagan-estate-planning-lessons-about-second>
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